



For Release: Friday, May 25, 2018

18-872-ATL

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

Occupational Employment and Wages in Mobile – May 2017

Workers in the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.07 in May 2017, about 13 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, 17 groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including computer and mathematical; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; and healthcare support. Two groups had significantly higher wages than their respective national averages: farming, fishing, and forestry; and production.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including healthcare practitioners and technical; production; and construction and extraction. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; education, training, and library; and management. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Mobile	United States	Mobile	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$24.34	\$21.07*	-13
Management	5.1	3.8*	57.65	55.30*	-4
Business and financial operations	5.2	3.3*	36.70	31.22*	-15
Computer and mathematical	3.0	1.7*	43.18	29.81*	-31
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.1*	41.44	40.31	-3
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5*	35.76	28.65*	-20
Community and social service	1.5	1.1*	23.10	19.80*	-14
Legal	0.8	0.6*	51.62	42.89	-17
Education, training, and library	6.1	4.2*	26.67	24.14	-9
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	0.9*	28.34	21.25*	-25
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.0	7.7*	38.83	33.12*	-15
Healthcare support	2.9	2.8	15.05	12.18*	-19
Protective service	2.4	2.1*	22.69	16.93*	-25
Food preparation and serving related	9.3	8.8	11.88	10.17*	-14
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.1	3.4*	13.91	11.27*	-19
Personal care and service	3.6	2.7*	13.11	10.77*	-18
Sales and related	10.2	10.8*	19.56	17.24*	-12
Office and administrative support	15.4	16.1	18.24	16.25*	-11
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1*	13.87	16.99*	22
Construction and extraction	4.0	5.7*	24.01	19.97*	-17
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	5.5*	23.02	21.90*	-5

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Mobile	United States	Mobile	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Production	6.3	8.0*	18.30	21.68*	18
Transportation and material moving	7.0	8.0*	17.82	16.76*	-6

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Mobile had 13,880 jobs in production occupations, accounting for 8.0 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.3-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$21.68, significantly above the national wage of \$18.30.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the production group included welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers (1,640), production workers' helpers (1,290), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,090). Among the higher paying jobs in this group were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers and chemical plant and system operators, with mean hourly wages of \$33.72 and \$32.93, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and drycleaning workers (\$9.78) and meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers (\$11.39). (Detailed data for production occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_33660.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the production group. For instance, chemical plant and system operators were employed at 16.0 times the national rate in Mobile, and welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers, at 3.6 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers had a location quotient of 0.9 in Mobile, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Alabama Department of Labor.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels; and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,949 establishments with a response rate of 74 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm.

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2017 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2017 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Mobile County in Alabama.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production occupations	13,880	1.3	\$21.68	\$45,100
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,090	1.5	33.72	70,150
Electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers ...	60	0.2	13.21	27,470
Assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers	460	0.3	15.89	33,050
Bakers	160	0.7	12.30	25,580
Butchers and meat cutters	60	0.4	16.08	33,440
Meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers	540	2.9	11.39	23,700
Food batchmakers	60	0.3	12.69	26,390
Food processing workers, all other	40	0.8	12.62	26,250
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	160	0.7	(5)	(5)
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	110	1.2	20.67	43,000
Machinists	380	0.8	24.43	50,810
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	280	13.4	25.34	52,700
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	50	0.4	14.96	31,120
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	1,640	3.6	23.75	49,400
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	70	1.4	20.37	42,360
Layout workers, metal and plastic	150	14.9	20.00	41,610
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	40	0.9	18.38	38,230
Printing press operators	100	0.5	17.27	35,920
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	270	1.1	9.78	20,350
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	(5)	(5)	9.55	19,870
Sewing machine operators	50	0.3	11.37	23,660
Upholsterers	40	0.9	15.91	33,090
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	120	1.0	16.52	34,370
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood ..	60	1.0	11.64	24,200
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	150	1.0	23.43	48,730
Chemical plant and system operators	590	16.0	32.93	68,490
Gas plant operators	(5)	(5)	37.19	77,360
Petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, and gaugers	140	3.1	28.97	60,260
Chemical equipment operators and tenders	420	4.5	23.83	49,570
Grinding and polishing workers, hand	110	3.0	15.49	32,230
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	130	0.8	20.42	42,480
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	50	0.7	16.89	35,140
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	(5)	(5)	16.48	34,270
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	560	0.9	26.35	54,810
Jewelers and precious stone and metal workers	(5)	(5)	15.47	32,170
Dental laboratory technicians	40	0.8	18.31	38,090
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	300	0.6	15.28	31,770
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	50	0.5	16.50	34,330
Painters, transportation equipment	120	1.9	19.84	41,270
Painting, coating, and decorating workers	50	2.9	16.89	35,140
Helpers--production workers	1,290	2.6	13.13	27,310
Production workers, all other	280	0.9	13.12	27,300

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_33660.htm
- (2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
- (3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
- (4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
- (5) Estimate not released.